

Domesticities

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342 fitting a series of short horizontal boards into the slots cut in the sides of the framework. The big family stove is built of
 252 a special black mud, deposited at the bottoms of rivers or streams, or dug from under the damp turf on their banks, which becomes very hard when dried. The stove is roughly square in form, with a hole at two or more corners round which the hard mud is raised into three upward projections, thus supporting the local rounded cooking-pots. These are made of copper and tinned over by the local blacksmith. We Europeans have to be very careful to have this lining kept intact to avoid copper poisoning, but one often finds the Ladaki brewing his tea in a pot from which all traces of tin have long ago vanished. Perhaps this is why we are so often upset when we accept invitations to meals in their houses. In front of the stove on the right-hand side is a projection of the same hardened mud, which is to accommodate the right-hand of the "fire blower," as he operates on the bellows. These are very effective instruments with a large nozzle pushed well under the glowing fuel, and an elongated bag of goat-skin at the outer end of which two small bars of wood are attached, with small loops of strongly-twisted thread in the middle. Through these the thumb and fingers are placed to open and close the mouth, and though it sounds and looks a simple process a certain knack must be acquired to get a good fire. Children of the house often keep it going, but the fire-blower is generally a sooty-faced, ragged woman servant, the counterpart of the old scullery-maid in the West. The stove has a large central tunnel with branches radiating out to the corner holes, and in the middle is a depression for the biggest hole of all.

252 Here the large pot of butter-tea is generally brewing. The tea, of which the best variety comes from Lhasa (where it is used as coinage) in bricks, is stewed for some hours, then mixed up in a special churn, phonetically named a *gurgur*, with butter, soda, salt and milk. Some writers have said our

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594 feast, proceedings may begin with *gyatug*, a dish of long vermicelli-like strips of flour-paste over which mincemeat in a nicely flavoured sauce is poured. Meat is also minced and made into delicious little dumplings, called *mok mok*, or well-flavoured and rolled up into sausages, which are eaten with rice—in fact in a rich house, after the plates of rice have been served, many kinds of subsidiary dishes are handed round with meat done up in different ways, sauces and vegetables, the last often soured. For a *dron* an experienced cook is hired to take charge of all the culinary operations, usually a Mussulman, otherwise one of the women of the house superintends the kitchen. But in the villages where there are no butcher shops, and a sheep is killed only occasionally, the staple food is butter-tea and barley-flour, varied with all sorts of vegetables prepared in several ways. The poorest people mix the flour in water just as it is, eating it out of cheap little wooden cups with their fingers.

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565 An ordinary middle class family will breakfast on butter-tea and small breads, raised with leaven called *kambir*; at mid-day they will have more tea, and perhaps chupattis with a sauce of vegetables, mixed with buttermilk, while in the evening, tea may or may not be served again with flour kneaded into a paste in some form or other, and mixed with meat well stewed in a broth.

More usually as the hot tea is drunk, the butter floating on the top is blown to one side, and after many cups a nice little residue is left with which to mix up the raw flour with the aid of a finger.

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[562] In summer when milk is more plentiful, its various products are much used as a food. The milk is collected into a large pot at night and warmed, some sour buttermilk being added to make it curdle. The pot is then covered with garments and blankets so as to maintain the blood-heat for proper fermentation. Some of it may be set aside to eat as *zho*, this being a kind of junket, only less insipid, especially when well

595 she and her husband actually owned two
583 houses and they had what, on the surface,
428 looked like an ordinary monogamous marriage. However, the two properties were not amalgamated. The woman was to carry on the name of Bata and the man that of the Tsungarpa house. Consequently, of the three boys which issued from this marriage, the first two inherited the Tsungarpa house, while the youngest inherited his mother's house and was entrusted with carrying on the name of that family.

[428] One of the sons of these three brothers,
842 Murup, inherited the Bata house from his
587 uncle, but remained childless after twenty
562 years of marriage. In such a case, oddly
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842 enough, the Tibetans seem to think that it
 587 is the husband's fault and they usually
 562 take in another man, in the hope that
 357 there will be children. Such a man is
 [ic4] known as a *posag*, that is, a man brought
 in for the purpose of fathering a child.
 However, when I asked this woman why
 she had remarried, if it was because she
 had no children, or because her husband
 was too old, she said, "No, those are only
 the official reasons." After I gained her
 confidence, she told me that she had mar-
 ried the second husband because she
 needed a servant in the house, and she
 found it cheaper to have another husband
 than to have a servant she would have to
 pay!

581 If a Tibetan woman marries a Moham-
 177 medan, she has to leave the polyandrous
 practice and becomes a member of the
 usual Mohammedan family system. The
 woman always takes the husband's religion,
 so that a Moslem girl who marries into a
 Buddhist family becomes polyandrous.

595 Now it must not be imagined that poly-
 gyny (where a man has a number of
 wives) does not exist in Tibet. One occa-
 sionally finds a case as when a young man
 goes on a long voyage and meets a girl of
 his choice and his brothers agree to bring
 her into the house. Thus, in Rupchu, I
 have seen three brothers sharing two wives,
 so that anything seems to be possible
 among the Tibetans and, on the whole,
 the system seems to work very well.

584 The children in Tibet are betrothed
 573 when they are 10 or 12 years old, usually
 588 by the parents. But this is not always the
 case. Very often the eldest boy chooses a
 wife himself, and his brothers and the
 other members of his family have to accept
 this woman as the common wife; they
 have no choice in the matter. But there
 is yet another custom in the Tibetan
 family which to us Westerners appears
 extraordinary indeed. As soon as the
 children are married, the parents are
 obliged to leave the house and the children
 take over. The father and mother must
 go to live in a smaller house, usually on